

YOUTH OPTIONS PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. What is the Youth Options Program?

The program is an opportunity for students in grades 11 and 12 currently enrolled in a Wisconsin public high school to attend a Wisconsin postsecondary institution for the purpose of taking one or more courses for high school and college credit.

2. Which postsecondary institutions qualify?

- All University of Wisconsin System institutions including the UW colleges and extensions
- All campuses of the Wisconsin Technical College System
- All Wisconsin private, nonprofit institutions of higher education
- All Wisconsin tribally controlled colleges

A complete listing may be found on the DPI website:

<http://www.dpi.wi.gov/youthoptions/yocolcont.html>

3. How does a student access the Youth Options Program?

Students interested in participating in the program should talk with staff at the high school and the postsecondary institution and decide on an appropriate course or courses. By March 1 for the fall semester, and October 1 for the spring semester, the student must notify the school board of their intent to participate in the program. This is accomplished by completing the PI-8700A (Program Plan and Report form) (see: <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/forms/pdf/pod8700-a.pdf>) and submitting it to the school district by the deadline date. The student should list all courses and alternate courses he or she might take.

Students must also apply to the postsecondary institution and comply with all of the institution's admissions standards and application deadlines. In the event that space is not available at a postsecondary institution or a student's preferred course(s) cannot be conveniently scheduled, the student is encouraged to list alternate course selections on the back side of the PI 8700A (<http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/forms/pdf/pod8700-a.pdf>) form so that the school board is able to determine the appropriateness or acceptability of the alternative course(s) when they review primary choices on the front of the form.

4. Who pays for the tuition, books, and fees?

The school board must pay for:

- Any course taken for both high school and college credit that is not comparable to a course offered in the school district.
- For private, tribal and the UW-System courses: the cost of books, fees and materials required for the courses that will not become the property of the student.
- For technical college courses: the cost of books and fees required for the courses.

The student must pay for:

- Postsecondary courses taken at the university or private colleges that are not for both high school and college credit.
- Postsecondary courses taken at any post-secondary institution that are comparable to a course offered at the school district.
- Reimbursement for a course that is dropped or failed (see No. 7 below).
- Transportation costs (see No. 8 below).
- Incidental college fees (i.e., parking permits), the cost of consumables (workbooks, notebooks, uniforms), equipment and supplies.

5. Can school districts require Youth Options students to pay for tuition, course fees, and/or books and then allow them to seek reimbursement from the school district if they pass the course(s)?

No. Sections 118.55(5), (6), and (7r), Wis. Stats, and Article X, Section 3 of the Wisconsin Constitution make it clear that the school district is responsible for these costs when both high school and college credit are requested.

6. Can the school district expect reimbursement for books and materials?

Books and materials purchased by the school district must be returned to the district upon the completion of the course unless other arrangements are made. If a student intends to keep the books or materials, or loses, damages, or destroys them, the district's return policy applies.

7. Can the school district request reimbursement for a course that a student drops or fails?

Yes. If a student receives a failing grade in a course or fails to complete a course for which a school board has made payment, the student's parent or guardian (or the student if he or she is an adult) is required to reimburse the school district the amount paid on the student's behalf, if requested. {§118.55 (7t)(c), Wis. Stats.}

Failure to make reimbursement when requested could result in future denial of youth options courses for that student.

8. Who is responsible for the cost of transportation?

Unless required by a student's individualized education program (IEP), parents and students are responsible for transportation between the high school and the postsecondary institution. Transportation assistance is available from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and priority is given to families who qualify for free/reduced lunches under the federal school lunch program. A claim for transportation reimbursement (form PI 8701) (see: <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/forms/pdf/pod8701.pdf>) can be filed with the department for the roundtrip mileage costs from the student's high school to the postsecondary institution. Reimbursement does not cover parking costs. The form should be sent to DPI within 30 days of the close of the college semester with a signed copy of the PI 8700A (Youth Options Program Plan and Report).

Please note that funds appropriated for this program may be insufficient to cover the full amounts requested. If this occurs, PI 40.06(4)(b), Wis. Admin. Code requires DPI to prorate available funds among eligible recipients.

9. Does a school district have the discretion to deny a Youth Options course offered at a higher cost institution in favor of a lower cost institution?

No, there is no authority in either the statute or administrative code to allow a school district to require a student to select a course at a postsecondary institution based on favorable cost.

10. May a school district limit the number of credits a student takes through the youth options program?

Yes, if a school district has a board policy in place, the school district may limit a student to 18 college credits over the two years the student is eligible for youth options. {§118.55(7t)(a), Wis. Stats.} The school district is not authorized to set the number of credits lower than 18, however the district may set the number of credits higher or not set a limit.

11. Can the number of college credits per semester be limited?

The number of college credits per semester may be limited by the post-secondary institution, but the school district does not have authority to limit the number of credits in a semester.

12. Does the district have financial responsibility for Youth Options courses that the local school district grants credit for but the credit is not needed by the student for graduation?

Yes. As long as other students are allowed to take courses in their high school that they do not need in order to graduate, Youth Options students must be allowed to take courses under similar circumstances at a college

13. **May a student take courses comparable to those offered by the school district? May the courses be included on the student's high school transcript and/or be substituted for required courses?**

Yes, if all of the following apply:

- The student pays for the course.
- The school district policy allows release time to take the course, if offered during the school day.
- The school district policy on accepting transfer credits allows the course to be included on the transcript and/or substituted for required courses.

14. **Are private school and home based students eligible to participate in Youth Options?**

No. The Youth Options program is available to "any public school pupil enrolled in the eleventh or twelfth grade." Private school and home-based students are not enrolled in the public school even if they are accessing up to two courses at the public school under §118.145(4), Wis. Stats.

15. **Can open enrollment students participate in the Youth Options program?**

Yes. Fulltime open enrollment students can participate in the Youth Options program. Application deadlines required for the two programs might make it impossible for a full time open enrollment student to participate in Youth Options during the first semester at their nonresident school. Part-time open enrollment students may participate in the Youth Options program through the nonresident school district or their school district of residence.

16. **Can a Youth Options student take a course that is offered by a postsecondary institution outside of Wisconsin?**

No, the statute specifically states that the program is available for programs located in the state (Wisconsin). Eligible institutions include the Wisconsin Technical College System, the University of Wisconsin System, Wisconsin private nonprofit institutions, and Wisconsin tribally controlled colleges.

17. **Does Youth Options apply to courses offered during evenings or weekends? What about summer school?**

A student may take a postsecondary course during or after regular school hours as long as the course is offered during the high school's regular academic year. Youth Options does not apply to summer school.

18. **How many postsecondary semester credits equal one high school credit?**

Four. One semester credit offered by a postsecondary course is equivalent to $\frac{1}{4}$ high school credit. {PI 40.07 (2), Wis. Admin. Code}

19. Does a course offered by a postsecondary institution via two-way interactive instructional television, correspondence, or the internet qualify as a Youth Options course?

As long as the course is offered by a Wisconsin post-secondary institution, a student may take the course as a correspondence course, a web-based course, through virtual or on-line programming, or by video conferencing. Likewise, a school district may meet the comparable course provision by offering a two-way interactive instructional television or internet course consistent with the district's policy.

20. Is a Youth Options student eligible to stay in a dormitory located at the institution of higher education where they take coursework?

When space is available, a Youth Options participant enrolled as a full-time student in a University of Wisconsin System institution will be eligible to live in a university residence. When residence halls are oversubscribed, particularly in the fall semester, preference will typically be given to regularly enrolled high school graduates.

21. What kind of technical college courses are eligible for high school credit?

High school students may enroll in regular occupational/technical courses and/or general education courses that satisfy the requirements of an associate degree or vocational diploma program. These courses are numbered with prefixes of 10, 20, 30, 31 and 32. Technical college remedial programs and courses are not eligible options under this program.

22. Are there differences for special education students under the Youth Options Program?

The youth options program is open to all students, including students with disabilities. However, the school board may refuse to permit a student with a disability to attend a technical college if the cost would impose an undue financial burden on the school district. {§118.55 (7r) (am), Wis. Stats.}

Students with disabilities who participate in the Youth Options program are encouraged to share their IEP and their need for services with the postsecondary institution to help insure success. School districts are required to ensure that proper support services are provided, consistent with the student's IEP. Accommodations for students with disabilities, including the type, level, and cost are negotiated at the local level between the school district and the post-secondary institution.

23. Are there differences in program requirements between technical colleges and other postsecondary institutions that participate in the Youth Options program?

Yes. Below is the entire list of differences that are documented in statute and administrative rule:

Technical Colleges	Other Postsecondary Institutions
Special education students may be denied access based on undue financial burden to the school district.	Special education students may <i>not</i> be denied access.
Student must be <i>in good academic standing</i> for the school board to approve youth options.	No provision made.
Technical colleges may refuse a student who has been identified to have discipline problems.	Are not informed of discipline problems under this statute.
Students who meet the definition of being a child at risk (under §118.153) cannot access the technical college through this program.	Children at risk are not included or excluded.
School district pays for books and fees, <u>but not</u> materials.	School district pays for books, fees <u>and</u> materials.

24. Is a youth options student allowed to participate in high school athletics and extra-curricular activities?

Yes, the student is considered to be fully enrolled in the local school district even if he or she is attending full-time at a postsecondary institution.

Need Additional Information:

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